



National Cheng Kung University

Institute of International Management

Ph.D. Program

Course: Qualitative Research Methods

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Research Project Title

Work Stereotypes and Meaning of Work  
(MOW) in Latin American Males

Living in Asia

Autumn 2011

*Work uplifts humanity dignity, therefore, is a natural right and should be undertaken with painstaking excellence.*

Martin Luther King, Jr.

*"Some politicians, looking for a quick fix, shout that we need 'jobs, jobs, jobs.' But such simplistic slogans simply do not cut deeply enough. They avoid the deeper questions that must be asked of work at this critical juncture in human and earth history"*

- Matthew Fox, The Reinvention of Work

## Background

Everybody works; everybody needs a work, a slang decent one. Decent work is a basic human right according to Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the article 23 says "Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment" (UN, 2011). The International Labour Organization states "work is central to people's page numbers advancement, strengthening individuals, their families, communities, countries and finally the world" (ILO, 2011) and even exist the Labour Day celebrated all over the world.

Work seems to be an essential and exclusive activity of the human being and becomes an all the time more major domain of their lives (Rappaport and Bailyn, 1988) and according Rosso et al., (2011) citing to Casey (1995) express "workers expect work to fulfill an increasingly larger set of psychological, social, and economical needs" fulfill. Academically, the Meaning of Work (MOW) has been studied in relationship with work motivation, absenteeism, work behavior, engagement, job satisfaction, empowerment, organizational identification, carrier development, stress, individual performance, personal fulfillment, purpose and significance of the job and eudaemonic aspects of well-being (Rosso et al; 2010).

MOW has been described in the academic literature since two main perspectives; psychological and sociological. A broad number of publications exist on the matter and largely most of them had emphasized on psychological aspects of the MOW. Psychological approximations states that MOW can be assembled by every person own discernment in the assumption that everyone has individual perspectives on the MOW shaped by previous individual work experiences and living interactions. Since this perspective explanations and definitions of the MOW have been lying under diverse definitions ranging from "general beliefs, values and attitudes about the work" (Rosso et al., 2010). In the sociological realm the description and explanation of the MOW obey to the conception that the individuals consider MOW linked to cultural and social considerations of value on their own works (Rosso et al., 2010).

Ok -

gap ↓

Here need to motivate the cultural perspective i.e., meaning of work in distinct cultures - has this been examined?

In the present research, the author will use a social theoretical perspective and a qualitative-inductive approach to develop his research ideas and hypothesis. Using a qualitative-inductive methodology have the advantage of enabling an account on complex social phenomena. In this case, the complexity between MOW and work stereotyping in a sample of males living and working in Asia and married with Asian ethnics.

You are getting too many issues into this short project. Stereotyping is another project.

The seminal work of Morse and Weiss (1955) using a large sample of employed men, established the basic paradigms to study MOW underneath a sociological perspective. Morse and Weiss concluded that for most men working has not only a utilitarian meaning (earning a livelihood) and that the vast majority of men in special the younger and more skilled, would accept work even if they do not have a real necessity to work. The authors explained this behavior based on the man's society associate function as a household provider; in addition, work is essential to produce a sense of well-being in the subjects.

Loosing the flow here. What is the direction in this part of the literature?

Tausky (1969) reported that the same trend is observed in a study of 150 managers, where a significant majority clearly indicated they would continue to work even if they could live comfortably without working. Apparently, this is verified also in nor Vecchio (1980) quoting to Brown (1954) mentioned that exist anecdotal proof in a sample of British blue-collar workers who became wealthy people by chance and returned to their habitual jobs immediately after take a short vacations. The author affirms that individuals keep working even though they do not require it as source of earnings and even if the work is rationally considered as monotonous, routine and repetitive; in this vein Tausky (1969), reported that in the most undesirable jobs the percentage of males that specify displeasure is not usually large.

Morse and Weiss (1955) also stated that MOW is expressed as a necessity, a sense of accomplishment, something to do, keeping busy, a way to contribute, and interestingly pointing that for some strata of the sample live without work is hard to consider. The findings of Vecchio (1980) who reviewed the work of Morse and Weiss, underscore significant difference in the MOW in the sample; where the subjects expressed a preference to discontinue working if they become wealthy. The author attributes this dissimilarity between both researches, due to cultural changes in the decades post 50's related to the attitudinal shift in the value attachment to work, in addition the author pointed out that the dissimilar results obeys to the questions wording used in the original work and the reviewed one. According with the scholar, Morse and Weiss in their research used questions' wordings that for many people would be extremely improbable and difficult-to-imagine situation; leading to the respondents to approach to a fantasy fulfillment causing disturbance in the final results.

Tausky (1969) studied MOW specifically in men blue-collar workers, under the consideration that MOW has four possible meanings, namely Instrumental, Quasi-expressive, Expressive A and Expressive B. Instrumental meaning is verified if work have to for economical reasons; Quasi-expressive meaning assumes work is proper and consumption is primary interest; Expressive A meaning presupposes work is proper, must be acceptable work and consumption is primary interest; finally Expressive B presumes work is proper, must be acceptable work and prestige level of work is the

primary interest. The scholar concludes that 3 out of four males from the sample have an Expressive A MOW, excluding of the analysis the instrumental and prestige oriented individuals.

Kaplan and Tausky (1974) rearrange and improve the above MOW using data collected through semi structured interviews in ~~hard-core~~ unemployed individuals. The authors used a theoretical conception that MOW has two typologies, Instrumental with two components and Expressive with four components. Instrumental components are linked to work as economical activity as a means of survive and work as scheduled or routinized activity which keeps one occupied. On other hand, expressive components are related to the individual psychological perceptions as work like intrinsically satisfying activity, morally correct activity, satisfying personal experiences and status and prestige activity. The results showed that the mains drivers to work were instrumental meanings; they need work for self and other's support; as economic security, work as activity to keep oneself busy and get off welfare charitable support. Among the expressive meanings the authors described liking for work, getting self-respect, help to others, work as natural human being activity, sense of achievement and accomplishment and source of new experiences and learning.

The scholars reported than a minority of the respondents clearly expressed a sense distasteful for work, evidence of do not know why work or ascertain the reason for work, even less did not respond to the questions. Age, gender, education and race have not strong influence or effect on the results, but interesting Puerto Ricans showed inclination to do not work if they became wealthy enough, although the vast majority of respondents opted for continuing work. As final conclusion is stated that "there can be little doubt that the exigencies of the lower-class life predisposed them (the poor) to seek from work what they most need in life – economical security".

The part time jobs are often viewed as not secures or with o ment and only provider of subsistence incomes and associated with dullness harmful working conditions (Kaplan 1974). Wielers and Raven (2011), studying part time jobs and work norms have reported that the value attachment to work itself and MOW as a requirement for a high-quality life declined and that the adherence to work obligation norm decreased for this type of jobs.

Loscocco and Kallemborg (1988) expressed that MOW has two main social shaped components: work obligation, which is a general orientation that echoes the importance of the work gender identity role; and more specific work values, which represents the functions that work serves for people. Thus, these scholars studied the aging of the people as important social consideration on MOW in two dissimilar cultures (Western vs. Asian); and found that the concept of work dedication as exp MOW in older men is comparatively superior to younger males in both cultures. In addition, t for social identity was linked to work seniority for both Asian and Western. Inasmuch, in the an enters together with age; the Asian respondents noticeably connected good pay to a bet consideration in comparison with the Western counterpart sample. The authors attribute this a great cultural changes experimented by the Asian countries, in special Japan; converging more and more with Western work values and mention that if this trend continues, "the frugal and self-sacrificed Japanese employee may disappear completely" (Loscocco and Kallemborg, 1988)

I'm searching for clues about your direction.

Ah, here - MOW in culture and expressions of this. This is what is needed earlier

The nonworking life is a social pattern of capital importance for persons and working activity may interfere markedly on; altering behaviors and living styles. In the case of work interference the concept of the MOW as work significance, becomes increasingly dominant in the individuals. Shieman et al., (2009) reported that over 70% of their studied population revels some degree of interference of work over theirs private lives and the MOW turns into a paradoxical source of dissatisfaction and satisfaction generating stress, This stress is not evenly distribute among genders and ages and in addition, this state of anxiety seems to be connected to the hierarchical and experience levels in the job; thus, a more authority, decision-making latitude, skills and earnings, the interference is expected to be greater, called by the authors "stress of higher status hypothesis".

Brief and Nord (1990) has defined that relationships with others outside of the work environment shall influence the meaning of work. Often individuals' most important non-work relationships are with their families but few scholars have directly studied the influence of family and family members on the meaning of one's work and lesser research has been done on the influence of the meaning of work when the individual change their marital statuses. Studies about the meaning of work among of individuals married with spouses of different cultures are almost inexistent.

There is a spread stereotype in America that people do not have a commitment or desire to work (Kaplan 1974), in addition Friedrich et al; (2006) (2005) mentioned that working stereotypes associated with Latin American workers as laziness, lack of seriousness in the work, irresponsibility and the concept that the work is something to trifle with; are broadly defunded and in somehow reinforced by cultural communications (cartoons, movies, magazines, etc) affecting the perception of the potential international employers to hire Latin American employees because stereotypes leading to reduce emotional connection and generate even hostility.

I would suggest just focusing on the MOW.

Study and research to better understand about MOW from the academic and human standpoints is fully justified since this a major activity in the life of every human being.

## Scope of Research

Via inductive approach the scope of this project is focused on study stereotyping and MOW in a group Latin-American males working in Asia and married with women belongs to Asian ethnics. The stereotypes under research are limited to those has been associated in the literature with Latin Americans, as such as, laziness, lack of seriousness in the work, irresponsibility and the concept that the work is something to trifle with. In addition, the research is set out to aspire to indentifying if the MOW and stereotypes in the respondents has been altered or not for the social facts of living In Asia and be marrying with Asians. Is expected that the findings of this research would lead to identify academic clues to corroborate or contradict the stereotyped ideas over MOW among Latin-American employees and its articulate function with living abroad and be married with spouses culturally distant.

Needs defining too

Ok - then you need to pull out more clearly the relevance of this.

## Research Objectives

questions?

- To fulfill the academic requisites required in the course "Qualitative Research Methods"
- To trained myself as researcher using qualitative-inductive approach
- To answer the below questions:

What makes work meaningful for Latin Americans working in Asia and married with Asians? Exist, if any, association among culture-social pressure, stereotypes and MOW in Latin Americans working in Asia and married with Asians? Are the stereotypes associated with Latin American workers influenced the current work? What is the role of the close family members like the spouse on the MOW.

- To have academic clues in the meaning of work
- To pursue a possible topic of research in my Ph.D. studies

quantitative focus...

## Methodology

The methodology used to develop this research project will consist in collecting data through primary and secondary research methods.

### Collecting Data Using Primary Research Method

Collecting data using primary research method in this research encompass the use of well-rationalized semi-structured retrospective interviews with standardized questions and open-end questions (Saunders et al., 2009). According with Koeber (2002) retrospective questioning interviews are helpful to order events and occurrences and when longitudinal data are not available and the researcher believes that the respondent can provide reliable information about their stories.

The standardized questions will provide the general guide of the interviews and will be written in English and later translated either to Spanish and Portuguese following the double translation technique suggested by Babbie (2008). The open-end questions provide respondents with opportunity to give detailed description of their particular experiences (Koeber, 2002) and will have the same methodological treatment that standardized ones.

back translation less of an issue for interviews than for questionnaires.

The interviews will be conducted either in Spanish and Portuguese; person-to-person using computer-aid commercial software (video conference) for one to two hours (Wharton, 1996) to a sample of five Latin American male white-collar employees in high tech industries, between 30

depth interviews - implies length

We'll come back to sampling. Ideas seem on track but explanation needs work.

holders of advanced academic degrees, living in Asia and married with ethnical Asians. The electronic interviews verbatim will be recorded in an electronic format provided by computer-aid commercial software for *a posteriori* analysis.

The selected sample has been arranged under a non probabilistic, purposive, critical case sample (Saunders et al., 2009). The respondent selection is purposive to try to avoid strong country subculture effects (Shiffman and Kanuk, 2007) and in addition, based on the reported by Milliken and Martins (1996) that people with similar educational backgrounds and characteristics often share similar life experiences and values and find this experiences and values validated with others of similar

characteristics. On contrary, different worldviews, assumptions and stated or unstated beliefs characteristic of different cultural groups can create differences of opinions evoking unconscious biases, stereotypes or prejudices (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992).

Following Vecchio (1980) each respondent will provide a questionnaire with demographic, socio-technical characteristics data and marriage data. In addition, each respondent will provide a complete description of his job duties and job title. Besides of, supply the basic information about the research the previous descriptions facilitate the adequate classification of each respondent. The measure of occupational prestige, according with the occupational prestige scores and the General Social Survey (GSS); which were based on the prestige model designed by Robert Merton, Judith Treas and Keiko Nakao (1990, 1994) and the ranking occupations by prestige (Daly, 2009). Table 1 shows some of the variables demographic, socio-technical characteristics data and its respective coding system (English version). This table is under current update and will be modified along the author search more related academic literature.

Profile - setting this up in this way is not so critical for qualitative work. I would focus more on concepts 'meanings' over defining variables

The second section of the interview will continue necessarily with questions including detailed descriptions of what attract to respondents to work in Asia, how closely their experiences match their expectations, how they do their jobs and what they found satisfying and frustrating about their work (Wharton, 1996).

Ok, some ideas for a broad flow.

The third section of the interview, will embrace enquires that allow explores their marriage stories and spouse significance with incidence on the role of them in the respondents' works. ~~The fourth~~ section will be belonging to the participants' work-stereotypes awareness and their impact in their own carriers and past and current working life. The questions of the third and fourth sections are under current development and not shown in this proposal.

Here - semi structured

The semi-structured section of the interview will be related to MOW and will follow the variables and coding published by Hodson (2002) and Vecchio (1980) with minute modifications introduced by the researcher. Table 2 shows the variables, question wording and its respective coding system (English version).

Non-statistical analysis  
Grounded theory does not employ statistical approaches.

The open-ended answers will be analyzed using standard descriptive statistical techniques and coded open-ended questions by approximating procedures and techniques of grounded theory as proposed by Koeber (2002); in addition, following the same author the quotations will be selecting general blueprints or characteristics found across the sample or because they describe the general patterns.

To access to the conclusions and generalizations from the research findings, will be performed a thorough analysis of work and marriage stories with objectives characteristics of the respondents such as kind of job, hierarchical position, seniority, working experience, stereotyping perception, stereotyping importance, years of marriage, spouse role in the job selection, etc.

Table 1\*

Variables and its respective coding system (English version)

Variable of Socio-Technical Characteristics	Coding	
Advanced academic degree	(0) Not	
Job autonomy	(1) None (5) V	age (4) High

Spend more time,  
instead on thinking  
about interview  
guideline  
opening statement  
key questions  
testing these out  
and refining the  
approach

\*Under current update

Table 2

Variables, question wording and its respective coding system (English version).

Variable of MOW	Question wording	Coding
Pride *	Do you feel a sense of satisfaction when you tell to someone about your work?	(1) Rare (2) Average (3) A great deal
Significance work *	Would you say your job is important to yourself?	(1) Insignificant (2) Somewhat significant (3) Fulfilling
Creativity*	How creative is your job?	(1) None (2) Little (3) Average (4) High (5) Very high
Effort bargaining*	How frequent do you offer your best effort in your job?	(1) Reticence practiced widely (2) Conditional effort given (3) Given freely
Extra effort*	Frequently, do you make more things /activities /tasks that those expected in your job?	(0) Not (2) Yes
Enthusiasm*	Are you enthusiastic in your job?	(0) Not (2) Yes
Cooperation*	When someone needs your help in the job, do you help?	(1) Absent (2) mixed (3) widespread
Commitment*	Are you committed with your current job?	(0) Not (1) Yes
Continuity **	If you were to get enough money to live as comfortably as you would like for the rest of your life, would you continue to work or would you stop working?	(1) Continue working (2) stop working
Satisfaction **	On the whole, how satisfied are you with the work you do – would you said that you are ....	(1) Very satisfy (2) moderately satisfy (3) a little satisfy (4) very dissatisfied
Motivation	Is your work inspirational?	(0) Not (1)

Hodson (2002)\* Vecchio (1980)\*\*

## **Collecting Data Using Secondary Research Method**

Review academic journals belongs to the main topic “meaning of work”; in addition review academic papers related to marital status, culture and marriage, work and family influence.

Review another sources of information as books, web sites and thesis related to the above topics.

## **Schedule**

The work is scheduled to start on the last week of October 2011 and finish according the required in the syllabus of the course “Qualitative Research Methods”

## **Cost**

The cost will be assumed by the researcher and will be related to:

Stationery: 2000 NT

Printing: 2000 NT

Binding: 1000 NT

English revision style: 2500 NT

## **Confidentiality**

All the data collected will remain under strictly confidentially. All the respondents will receive an electronic document stated clearly the research purpose and ask for a specific writing authorization. The respondents only will be identifying by numbers and codes and no one know about the other respondents.

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## FEEDBACK ON YOUR PRESENTATION

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<b>QUICK PRESENTATION FEEDBACK</b>			
<b>GROUP:</b>	<b>EDU</b>		
<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>
Are ideas presented connected with the aim of the presentation?	Are the ideas presented clear supported with evidence and logical argument?	Is it easy to follow & to understand? (Are the slides clear and easy to follow e.g. use of new pictures, words, graphs)	Overall impression (is it a group presentation etc.?)
40%	30%	20%	10%

<p>Comments</p> <p><b>Presentation</b></p> <p>I think it is fair to say your presentation was not doing justice to the quality that you aspire to.</p> <p>Questions – you need to think about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How to focus these – see the first one – very general</li> <li>- Different people = individuals?</li> <li>- What is the influence of... this infers causality</li> </ul> <p>Literature – what literature is relevant to the project? (e.g., culture). Please note you can't talk about 'reviewing literature' and then not show any in your slides. At conferences this will really hurt the impression you give.</p> <p>What is the indication that family is critical to the meaning of work?</p> <p>How does laziness relate to the project?</p> <p>Edu the project is interesting but it needs much focusing. The questions are too broad. While you see them as guiding my objective feedback is that they are too broad and lack consistency with what follows.</p> <p>Focus the questions and motivated them through a more effective introduction to the literature.</p> <p><b>Report</b></p> <p>Since the presentation this is now a stronger piece of work. Note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- I would suggest dropping stereotyping. This makes the project too large.</li> <li>- Motivate the focus on the cultural</li> <li>- Motivate the relevance of family in MOW</li> <li>- The last two points mean removing/refocusing some of the literature ('I'm losing the flow section)</li> <li>- The section at the start of the method is starting to become clear and has a</li> </ul>			

## FEEDBACK ON YOUR PRESENTATION

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sense of purpose. The comments on sampling are using appropriate terminology e.g., purposive – this is positive and helpful.

- The end of the method is starting to feel disjointed. I think you are still drawn towards the need to ‘define variables’ towards a statistical approach. Focus more on *descriptive* meanings of dimensions and attributes. You are concerned with interviewing and developing rich descriptions your Latin American participants give to the MOW in the Asian context. This focus leads to attention on designing the interview guideline, testing it, refining it and starting to engage with the *meanings* that emerge.

Progress!

84% (focusing more on the report than the presentation).

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Grade: 0%